

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2020*

**Remarks on the Announcement of Guidance on Constitutional Prayer in Public Schools and an Exchange With Reporters**

*January 16, 2020*

*The President.* Well, thank you very much. A couple of things happened today that are very exciting.

*Developments With U.S. Trade Agreements*

The USMCA passed the Senate. It's one of the biggest trade bills ever made.

And then, yesterday, as you know, China passed, and that's something that is extraordinary. And it's going to have tremendous far-reaching effects, including our relationship, long term, with China, our farmers and manufacturers and bankers, and everybody. It's jobs. It's jobs like we've never seen before, and that's going to be something very special. And USMCA today, which just passed by a very comfortable vote—a very high vote—we are very proud to have that.

So we've done two of the biggest trade deals. They are the two biggest trade deals in the world ever done. And we're honored to have done them in a short period of time.

*Guidance on Constitutional Prayer in Public Schools*

We are gathered in the Oval Office for the National Religious Freedom Day, something very important and very special and special to me and the people that are gathered around me.

This afternoon we're proudly announcing historic steps to protect the First Amendment right to pray in public schools. So you have the right to pray. And that's a very important and powerful right. There's nothing more important than that, I would say.

We're joined by the Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen, and students and advocates from across America. And advocates they were. They've been calling and writing by the thousands. And you're representing that large group of people.

In a sacred principle of our Republic that government must never stand between the people and God. Yet, in public schools around the country, authorities are stopping students and teachers from praying, sharing their faith, or following their religious beliefs. It is totally unacceptable. You see it on the football field. You see it so many times where they're stopped from praying. And we are doing something to stop that.

Tragically, there is a growing totalitarian impulse on the far-left that seeks to punish, restrict, and even prohibit religious expression. Something that, if you go back 10 years or 15 years or 20 years, it was un-thought of that a thing like that could even happen—that anybody would even think of something like that happening.

That is why today my administration is issuing strong new guidance to protect religious liberty in our public schools. The right of students and teachers to freely exercise their faith will always be protected, including the right to pray.

So we call this the "right to pray." Is that a good idea? Good? Right? You like that, right?  
[Laughter]

Nine Federal agencies are also proposing new rules to roll back discriminatory regulations. So we have rules to roll back discriminatory regulations on religious service organizations. And earlier this afternoon my White House released a new memo to make sure Federal funding is never used to violate the First Amendment, which is a very big deal.

With us today is Hannah Allen, a high school freshman from Texas. Hannah, would you tell us what happened at your school with respect to you and prayer? Hannah?

*Honey Grove, TX, resident Hannah Allen.* Thank you, Mr. President.

*The President.* Thank you, darling. Right here.

*Ms. Allen.* So me and a group of students from our school wanted to pray for our former classmate's brother who had got hurt in an accident.

After the prayer, our principal told us, "Don't do that again." So the next day, parents had called and complained. He told us that we could pray, but he said we had to hide in the gym or behind a curtain or somewhere away from everyone else.

And I know that if this can happen in a small town in Texas, it can happen anywhere across America, and that's not right. No one should feel ashamed of their faith, especially in school or anywhere.

*The President.* Well——

*Ms. Allen.* And——

*The President.* What—so what ultimately happened? How was that resolved?

*Ms. Allen.* So we got with First Liberty. They've been amazing. They supported us the whole way. And they sent the school a letter, and the school complied with the letter, and they changed the—yes.

*The President.* And now you're able to do that?

*Ms. Allen.* We are.

*The President.* Good. Well, now it's going to be much easier yet. Okay? All right? Thank you, darling. That was beautiful. Thank you very much.

We're also joined by Madelyn—Marilyn Rhames, a former teacher and the founder of Teachers Who Pray. Marilyn, if you could, let us know—where is——

*Teacher Who Pray Founder and Chief Executive Officer Marilyn Anderson Rhames.* I'm right here.

*The President.* Good. Thank you very much. Maybe you give us a little bit about what happened?

*Ms. Rhames.* Yes. So, thank you. I'm Marilyn Rhames. I'm the founder and president of Teachers Who Pray. And I founded Teachers Who Pray because I, as a teacher, believe in the beauty of every child and the unlimited potential that resides within. However, the students that I was getting weren't set up for success, because they were so significantly behind grade level. And I taught in Chicago public schools for 14 years. And during that time, we were losing students every year to gun violence. And one year, it was like 30, 32 students getting killed.

And I was overwhelmed with the heaviness of the work, so I thought about quitting, and I decided not to. I was going to fight. And I was going to pray and uplift my spirit so that I can do the job that I knew God had called me to do.

So I began praying with other teachers in the building who were like-minded, and we really supported each other, built community, built more hope, built more joy in the work despite it being so difficult. And we grew. Like, right now there's over 150 chapters of Teachers Who Pray, because teachers need that spiritual support and guidance.

And today, I believe it's super important, because there is a myth out there that what Teachers Who Pray does and other organizations do for teachers, spiritual wealth is not legal. And it absolutely is.

And I'm here to tell teachers that we need to pray, if you're of faith. We need to pray. We need to buckle up and just do what we have to do for our kids, because they need us, and they're depending on us. And if we're not strong, we can't make them strong. So that's why I'm here.

*The President.* That was really beautifully said. Thank you very much. That's beautiful. Thanks, Marilyn.

So while I'm President, which will be hopefully for 5 years—and, I don't know, maybe we'll work on, with the media, we'll work on a major extension of that. Right? *[Laughter]* But we will not let anyone push God from the public square. We will uphold religious liberty for all.

And I want to thank you all, and God bless you all for being here. It's a great time in our country. We're doing things that nobody thought were possible.

I'd like to ask, if I might, Secretary DeVos and Deputy Attorney General Rosen to say a few words about our actions, if you don't mind. Please.

*Secretary of Education Elisabeth Prince DeVos.* Thank you, Mr. President.

*The President.* Go ahead, Betsy. Please.

*Secretary DeVos.* Thank you for your leadership, your courage, and your friendship to people of faith, especially our Nation's children. Too many misinterpret a separation of church and state as an invitation for government to separate people from their faith.

In reality, our Constitution doesn't exist to protect us from religion; it exists to protect religion from government. The First Amendment affirms our free exercise of religion, and we don't forfeit that first freedom to anyone or in any place, especially in public schools. After all, it's been noted that as long as there are final exams in schools, there will be always be prayer in schools. *[Laughter]*

Thanks to your leadership, Mr. President, today we remind schools of the law with respect to religious expression, something that hasn't been done in more than 15 years. And where there are violations, we now make clear that the law requires States to establish a clear process for students like Hannah and Michael——

*Bountiful, UT, resident William McLeod.* William.

*Secretary DeVos.* William——parents and teachers like Marilyn to report them.

It also notes that the law directs States to tell us about any and all complaints as well.

This administration and you is, and always will be, committed to ensuring all believers have the freedom to learn, to pursue our passions, to use our talents, and to live in accordance with the unique purpose that God has called us each to do.

If we embrace that freedom, our faith will be a light no darkness can overcome. Thank you again, Mr. President——

*The President.* Thank you very much.

*Secretary DeVos.* ——for your leadership.

*The President.* Beautiful. Thank you, Betsy, very much.

Jeff.

*Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey A. Rosen.* Well, thank you. Thank you, Mr. President. And thank you for your leadership on this really critical issue. There are—the fundamental freedom that you've been supporting for Americans to practice their faith is so important and is so appreciated by millions and millions of Americans.

And, at the Department of Justice, we remain firmly committed to enforcing Americans' constitutional rights, including this one. So that's part of why I'm very honored and privileged to be a part of today's announcement on the new guidance document about prayer in school.

I think sometimes people don't appreciate that there are many, many Americans who feel called to pray during the day, and our First Amendment to our Constitution protects that. And sometimes, I think there's a confusion about this issue as to whether it's trying to force people to pray who don't want to, but that's not what this is about. This is about protecting the rights of those who do to have the liberty to do that on school grounds. And that is protected——

*The President.* Right.

*Deputy Attorney General Rosen.* ——by the First Amendment.

So today's guidance reaffirms and clarifies and spells out for Americans what that freedom is with regards to prayer and religious expression. And I really think that the courage of people of faith, such as the folks we have here today, is really a reminder of how important our constitutional liberties are and of the great action that your administration is taking to ensure that they remain legally protected.

And so, again, Mr. President, I thank you——

*The President.* Thank you, Jeff. Good job.

*Deputy Attorney General Rosen.* ——and the Secretary DeVos and the whole administration for the efforts to make this happen.

*The President.* Very good job. Thank you very much, Jeff.

Paula, would you like to say something? Go ahead.

*Paula White-Cain, senior pastor, New Destiny Christian Center in Apopka, FL.* Yes, sir. It's such an honor to stand here with you, President Trump, and with this amazing team. And the policy and everyone who had made this, this is a huge thing. So we said it is a constitutional right, a First Amendment right. And, President, you continue to be such a fighter for people's freedoms, for their liberties. As you often say, "We worship God, not government."

Perceived and perception has often been—people have been bullied, harassed, stopped from practicing their faith. You have so many people that have walked out here, very brave, with horrific stories of being persecuted because they simply wanted to pray. And prayers, we know, makes a huge difference. So thank you for standing for all——

*The President.* Thank you very much, Paula.

*Pastor White.* ——religious liberties.

*The President.* That's great. Thank you very much.

Would anybody like to say anything? Go ahead. *[Laughter]*

*Mr. McLeod.* Can I tell my story?

*The President.* Yes, go ahead. *[Laughter]* Go ahead.

*Mr. McLeod.* So it all started when I walked in the classroom. I was—it was Ash Wednesday, and I had my ashes on my forehead, and all the kids in the classroom was like, "Is

that dirt on your forehead?" Because they don't know, because they aren't Catholic, and they were all Mormon.

*The President.* Oh.

*Mr. McLeod.* So—because I was like—they're—that was like—I was like the only Catholic in that school. So then, the teacher came up and was like: "It's unacceptable. Wipe it off." And I told her four times, and she didn't listen, and she made me wipe it off in front of all the kids.

*The President.* Wow.

*Mr. McLeod.* That's my story. So thank you, Mr. President.

*The President.* Well, it's not going to be happening anymore. Okay?

*Mr. McLeod.* Thank you, Mr. President.

*The President.* All right?

*Mr. McLeod.* I just don't want anyone to feel like that.

*The President.* That's a beautiful—it's a beautiful story. Well told, because it sets such a good plate out there for people. I mean, you hear a story like that, it's such a shocking—Jeff, that's a shocking story, right? You were the only Catholic in the school?

*Mr. McLeod.* Well, I think there's one more. [*Laughter*]

*The President.* But they didn't have any idea. It was just—and the teacher did not treat you properly, right?

[*At this point, Mr. McLeod nodded his head in agreement.*]

*The President.* Okay. We're changing that. Okay? Great job. That was beautiful.

Come here. Give me that hand.

Anybody over here? Anybody? Sure.

*Colorado Springs, CO, resident Chase Windebank.* Mr. President, thank you so much for the opportunity to be in the Oval Office. So much history has taken place here. It's surreal. Thank you, sir.

*The President.* Good.

*Mr. Windebank.* My name is Chase Windebank. I started a small group of students praying in high school during a free period. And by my senior year, it had grown to a community of 90 students. It was so encouraging. But later in senior year, the administration wound up banning us from praying during school hours, not even during lunch.

And so I remember thinking I didn't want to file a lawsuit at all, but after many meetings unsuccessful with the administration, I wound up realizing it was the only way to secure future students' rights to pray. And so thank you, sir, that now I get to have the opportunity to tell students to live out their faith in big and small ways——

*The President.* That's right. That's right.

*Mr. Windebank.* ——in the future. And you guys are making sure that the Founding Fathers are living on in our Nation. So thank you, sir, very much.

*The President.* Beautiful. Thank you very much. That's very nice.

*Mr. Windebank.* Thank you, sir.

*The President.* Yes.

*Torrance, CA, resident Malak Hijaz.* I pray five times day. Oh, my name is Malak Hijaz. I pray five times a day and I have to pray at lunch. And I would bring the hijab to cover my hair, and kids would make fun of me, harass me, and attack me. And I would tell the principal, and the principal actually blamed everything on me. At the end, me and my mom complained so many times, and I didn't have a good education at the end. So yes, everything was blamed on me.

*The President.* And we're going to take care of that, right?

*Ms. Hijaz.* Yes.

*The President.* Thank you, darling.

*Ms. Hijaz.* Thank you.

*The President.* Beautiful. Thank you very much.

*Mother Samira Hijaz.* Thank you so much.

*Wellington, FL, resident Ariana Hoblin.* Mr. President.

*The President.* Okay, we'll I want to thank everybody for being here.

Did I hear somebody else? Yes, please. Go ahead.

*Ms. Hoblin.* Hi, my name is Ariana Hoblin. I'm a high school student in South Florida. And in my middle school, I was the only Jewish person, and I was very open with my religion. I would announce when I would have Shabbat plans, which is a day of prayer and rest.

And when we started our Holocaust unit, it ended with everybody being nice to me, because I spoke out about it. And I wanted to inform people, and I wanted to help people learn. And the students started to write swastikas on my belongings, on my arms. I was pushed and shoved in the hallway.

They even went so far as to take my face and put it on Anne Frank's body. And it was sent around to three different schools. And I was terrified to say I was Jewish. And that should never be in anyone's mind. Anyone in school should be able to say: "I am what whatever religion I am. And I practice this, and I believe this."

And it's been 3 or 4 years since middle school. I'm a junior in high school and I have continuously fought for anyone to have the right to exercise their constitutional rights in school. And I just want to thank you so much for everything you've done and for Israel and for everything that you've truly done for all of us.

*The President.* Well, thank you very much. So beautiful. Thank you. It's working out better now? Or is it sort of similar?

*Ms. Hoblin.* Yes, my high school is extremely supportive of me. I go to Wellington High School.

*The President.* Good.

*Ms. Hoblin.* And they've helped me be a leader in the Jewish community now.

*The President.* Well, this is going to help too.

*Ms. Hoblin.* Thank you. [Laughter]

*The President.* Thank you very much.

*Bremerton, WA, resident Joseph Kennedy.* Mr. President.

*The President.* Yes, please.

*Mr. Kennedy.* Coach Kennedy.

*The President.* Coach.

*Mr. Kennedy.* We talked a few times. I coach up in Bremerton High School——

*The President.* Right.

*Mr. Kennedy.* ——in Bremerton, Washington. And I was fired for praying after football games.

*The President.* Right.

*Mr. Kennedy.* And it's just so nice to have First Liberty representing me and having a President that has the guts to stand up for us. So I appreciate you, sir.

*The President.* Thank you, Coach.

*Mr. Kennedy.* Oorah. [*Laughter*]

*The President.* Good coach too. He's a good coach.

*Mr. Kennedy.* Thank you.

*Pikeville, KY, resident Emily Chaney.* Mr. President.

*The President.* Thank you all very much.

Yes.

*Ms. Chaney.* My name is Emily Chaney. I'm a sophomore at East Ridge High School. And I started a prayer locker at my school, and it really helped a lot of people who had different prayer requests. Just——

*The President.* Where do you come from with that beautiful accent? [*Laughter*] I love the accent. Where do you come from?

*Ms. Chaney.* Pikeville, Kentucky.

*The President.* Kentucky. Oh, we love Kentucky. [*Laughter*] We love Kentucky.

*Ms. Chaney.* I started a prayer locker at my school, and it helped a lot of kids who have many different prayer requests just to let them know that someone was there for them and cared for them. And Americans United for Separation of Church and State sent a letter to our Board of Education that the prayer lockers needed to be taken down.

And whenever my teacher told me my school was notified that I had to take my prayer locker down, I was heartbroke, because I had, like, 10 prayer requests a day. And that was—I just feel like it really helped move in our community, in our schools. And I just—I'm just so thankful for you and all you've done for our country.

*The President.* Thank you very much.

*Ms. Chaney.* Thank you.

*The President.* Say hello to everybody in Kentucky for me, okay? [*Laughter*] And beyond. And beyond Kentucky.

*Ms. Chaney.* Thank you.

*The President.* Okay? We're all set?

*National Alliance of Faith and Justice Cofounder, President, and Chairman of the Board of Directors Addie L. Richburg.* Mr. President.

*The President.* Yes, please.

*Dr. Richburg.* I come from a heritage and from a faith persuasion that every day of my life, from childhood to now, was grounded in faith. And it is my belief that, had we not had that freedom to exercise that faith, we would not be where we are today.

And so, for that reason, we look at this moment as epic and an opportunity to return to where we have one time been, the opportunity to freely express ourselves and to share with others, who might feel the same way, how far we've been brought and how far we must come through faith.

*The President.* Beautiful. So nicely stated. Thank you very much.

You were going to say something?

*Gateways to Better Education Founder and President Eric Buehrer.* Yes, Mr. President, I wanted to thank you. Eric Buehrer, with Gateways to Better Education.

*The President.* Right.

*Mr. Buehrer.* And these guidelines haven't been updated and reissued since 2003.

*The President.* Right.

*Mr. Buehrer.* And when we saw that and contacted the Department of Education, we were so gratified of the response from Secretary DeVos and others on your staff that said, "Yes, we need to address this and update these." Other administrations should have done it every 2 years, and it hadn't been done.

So thank you so much for stepping up and really supporting religious freedom in schools.

*The President.* Well, we covered a lot of territory in here, as you know, because, you're right, it's been many years since they were updated.

*Mr. Buehrer.* It has.

*The President.* So I think it's very important.

Well, thank you all very much. Go ahead.

### *Religious Freedom*

*Q.* Yes, Mr. President, tell me a little bit about what many folks, especially folks of faith, view as a cultural war out there. Prayer, a lot of things going on in society, what are your views on this cultural war that we hear so much about?

*The President.* Well, it is a cultural war, and you have two sides. And you have a side that believes so strongly in prayer, and they're being restricted, and it's getting worse and worse. And I think we've made a big impact. And we're loosening up a lot, and I want to loosen it up totally.

But you do have—you have things happening today that 10 or 15 years ago would have been unthinkable, what's happening. Taking the word "God" down, taking the word "Christmas" out. You know, we—I think we've turned that one around very good. I think we've turned both of them around very good. But we're not going to let it happen. We're never going to let that happen. And we're fighting it hard. You know better than anybody, we're fighting it very hard. And we're opening it up, and we're opening up again.

So stories like you hear—but so many other stories—hopefully, in the future, you're not going to be hearing too much about that. Okay? Thank you. Good question.



*Businessman Lev Parnas/The President's Popularity/National Economy*

*Q.* Mr. President, what is your response to Lev Parnas, who says that your efforts in Ukraine were all about 2020, that you just wanted Joe Biden out? What's your response to that?

*The President.* Well, I don't know him. I don't know Parnas, other than I guess I had pictures taken, which I do with thousands of people, including people today that I didn't meet. But—just met them. I don't know him at all. Don't know what he's about. Don't know where he comes from. Know nothing about him.

I can only tell you: This thing is a big hoax. It's a big hoax. We call it—this is the current hoax. We've gone through the Russian witch hunt. We've gone through a lot of them—from probably before I came down the escalator, but certainly, since I came down the escalator. You take a look at what's happened.

*Q.* But he says that——

*The President.* And, in the meantime, our country——

*Q.* He says that you know what you were——

*The President.* It doesn't matter what he says. He's trying to probably make a deal for himself.

*Q.* But he says that you knew what Giuliani was doing in Ukraine, that you knew what he was doing——

*The President.* I don't even know who this man is, other than, I guess he attended fundraisers, so I take a picture with him. I'm in a room; I take pictures with people. I take thousands and thousands of pictures with people all the time—thousands—during the course of the year. And oftentimes, I'll be taking a picture with somebody. I'll say, "I wonder what newspaper that one is going to appear in."

No, I don't know him. Perhaps he's a fine man; perhaps he's not. I know nothing about him. But I can tell you this——

*Q.* He described a situation that was more than just taking pictures, Mr. President. He says that——

*The President.* I don't know him. I don't believe I've ever spoken with him.

*Q.* ——he was with Giuliani when you were on the phone with Giuliani. And he said that there was a——

*The President.* I don't believe I've ever spoken to him. I meet thousands of people——

*Q.* ——that there was a pressure campaign on the President of Ukraine.

*The President.* I meet thousands and thousands of people, as President. I take thousands of pictures. And I do—and I do it openly, and I do it gladly. And then, if I have a picture where I'm standing with somebody at a fundraiser—like, I believe I saw a picture with this man. But I don't know him. I had never had a conversation that I remember with him.

Certainly——

*Q.* So when he said Mulvaney knew about this——

*The President.* Let me just tell you: You just have to take a look at the polls.

*Q.* ——that Bolton knew about this——

*The President.* Quiet. You just have to take a look at the pictures. You just have to take a look at the polls. You see I don't need anybody's help. We're doing phenomenally well. The economy is the best it's ever been in—we have never had an economy like this in history. We just made the two best trade deals in the history of our country. We are doing well.

I don't need the help of a man I never met before, other than perhaps taking a picture at a fundraiser or something, if that's where it was taken.

*Q.* He makes it sound like this was just about taking out Joe Biden.

*The President.* So—go ahead.

#### *World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland/National Economy*

*Q.* Are you still going to Davos? And if you are, what's the message you want to send being——

*The President.* I will probably be going to Davos. I've been invited. We have tremendous world leaders, and we also have the great business leaders. And we want those business leaders all to come to the United States. Some of the businesses left the United States because they were disgusted with what happened. And now they're all coming back.

We are booming. Our country is the hottest country anywhere in the world. There's nothing even close. Every world leader sees me and they say, "What have you done? This is the most incredible thing that we've ever seen."

I understand the stock market, today, broke 29,000. When I came in, it was a fraction of that. It was a number that, frankly, would have gone, and it would have been cut in half had the other person or the other party won. The number would have been cut in half.

We are doing so well. And I want to get more. We have tremendous room for growth in our country, in terms of the economy. We have tremendous, powerful room for growth.

So I'm going to be going to Davos. I'll be meeting the biggest business leaders in the world; getting them to come here. I'll also be meeting with foreign leaders. Okay?

#### *The President's Support Among Catholics*

*Q.* Mr. President, you've been talking about prayer and faith today. What's your message to the millions of Catholics in the United States? Why should they vote for you in the upcoming election—Catholics?

*The President.* Well, I have a great relationship with Catholics. I've done so much for Catholics. You take look at the abortion issue. You take a look at many of these—you have Mexico City; you take a look at so many of the different issues. My relationship with Catholics and the Catholic Church has been very, very good, as you know very well.

Yes, Jeff. Go ahead.

#### *Personal Attorney to the President Rudolph W. Giuliani*

*Los Angeles Times staff writer Noah Bierman.* Mr. President, Rudy Giuliani wrote a letter to Zelenskiy requesting a private meeting, and he said it was in his capacity as private counsel to President Donald J. Trump—this was before the Inauguration. Did you authorize him to write that letter? And what was your understanding of what the meeting was supposed to be about?

*The President.* Well, I don't know anything about the letter. But certainly, Rudy is one of the great crime fighters in the history of our country. He's certainly probably the best over the last 50

years. He was also the greatest mayor in the history of the city of New York. I think Rudy was truly an outstanding mayor.

As an example, his endorsement of Bloomberg got Bloomberg elected. He wouldn't have even been mayor. But Rudy was the greatest crime fighter. And Rudy is somebody that, frankly, having him on my side was a great honor for me, and it has been a great honor for me.

Rudy Giuliani—Rudy Giuliani did a phenomenal job over a long period of time in fighting crime. And frankly, he's a very legitimate guy, a very straight shooter. I didn't know about a specific letter, but if he wrote a letter, it wouldn't have been a big deal. Rudy was always in—it was very important to Rudy that I be a great President, and that's okay with me. It was very important to a lot of people, because our country was going to hell, and now our country is on a path that we haven't seen in decades and decades. We've never done better.

Go ahead.

*Q.* What was——

*The President.* No, no. Not you. Go ahead.

### *Senate Impeachment Trial*

*Q.* The trial is starting next week. What's your view on how long it should take and what witnesses you——

*The President.* Well, I think it should go very quickly. It's a hoax. It's a hoax. Everybody knows that. It's a——

### *The President's Telephone Conversations With President Volodymyr Zelenskiy of Ukraine/U.S. Assistance to Ukraine/Intelligence Community Whistleblower/Impeachment/National Economy*

*Q.* And witnesses? What about those?

*The President.* It's a complete hoax—the whole thing with Ukraine. So you have a perfect phone call. This is a call, fortunately—it was actually two phone calls. You people don't report that. There were two calls. They were both perfect calls. In fact, probably among the nicest calls I've ever met—made to foreign leaders.

Now, so you have these perfect calls, and everybody says it now. Before they knew they were so good—because, fortunately, they were transcribed—you had other people saying terrible things about the calls. You had a fake whistleblower that wrote a report that bore no relationship to what was said. Everything was false.

You have now the Ukrainian President and the Foreign Minister of Ukraine saying there was nothing done wrong. In fact, they said there was absolutely no pressure whatsoever. Everything was perfect. And they impeach. It's totally partisan. We had 195 to nothing, Republican votes. I guess we got a Democrat actually came over to the Republican side. We had 195 to nothing.

This is a hoax. It's a sham. I did the biggest deal ever done in the history of our country yesterday in terms of trade—and probably other things too, if you think about it: the deal with China. And that was the second story to a total hoax.

Today we just had passed the USMCA. It's going to take the place of NAFTA, which was a terrible deal. And the USMCA will probably be second to this witch-hunt hoax, which, hopefully, everyone knows is not going anywhere. There was nothing done wrong. This was a perfect phone call. Think of it: The President of the United States, who's led the greatest growth—the greatest—

the greatest economic revival of any country anywhere in the world is the United States, as big as it is. We're doing better than any other country, by far.

Our unemployment numbers are the best they've been in over 50 years. African American, Asian American, Hispanic American unemployment, the best in the history of our country. And I've got to go through a hoax, a phony hoax, put out by the Democrats so they can try and win an election that, hopefully, they're not going to win.

It was put out for purposes of winning an election. Our country is doing great. Our country has never done better. So they figure the only thing they can do—they failed on the Mueller report; that was a bomb. After 2½ years, they failed. Now they said, "What can we do?" And they pick up a phone call that was perfect. But they didn't know it was perfect. They only found out later. They made up a phone call.

What they did—look, what they did—you have a corrupt person—he's a corrupt politician named Adam Schiff, and he made up a phone call. He went out—you'll hear about this as you grow older. [Laughter] He went out, and he said things that—"He said quid pro quo eight times." It was no times. He said: "Don't call me. I'll call you." That's a mob statement. I never said that.

Fortunately, I released the transcript of the call. The transcript was perfectly accurate. And now everybody agrees, because it went through a lot, and they said, "Well, could you add one word here?" Our Lieutenant Colonel said, "Well, I think they should add"—they added the word. Everything—everyone agrees the transcript is perfect, done by total professionals, right?

But I released that after they had done these fraudulent acts. And you get impeached on this.

We have the greatest economy in the history of our country. We have the highest job numbers. Today it was just announced, we have more people working in the United States than ever before in the history of our country—almost 160 million people. We're doing an incredible job.

And for absolutely no reason——

### *Impeachment*

*Q.* Mr. President, during that call, you said Marie Yovanovitch was "going to go through some things."

*The President.* ——and for absolutely no reason, I got impeached.

*Q.* Can you address that?

*The President.* It's a disgrace, and it's a hoax. Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:42 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York City; Minister of Foreign Affairs Vadym Volodymyrovych Prystaiko of Ukraine; Rep. Jefferson H. Van Drew; former Department of Justice Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller III; Rep. Adam B. Schiff, in his capacity as chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; and National Security Council Director for European Affairs Alexander S. Vindman. Ms. Allen referred to Lee Frost, former principal, Honey Grove Middle School in Honey Grove, TX. Mr. McLoed referred to Moana Patterson, teacher, Valley View Elementary School in Bountiful, UT. Reporters referred to former Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.; Acting White House Chief of Staff John M. "Mick" Mulvaney; former National Security Adviser John R. Bolton; and former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Marie L. Yovanovitch.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Prayer in public schools, Federal guidance announcement; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: White House.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Allen, Hannah; Bloomberg, Michael R.; Buehrer, Eric; Chaney, Emily; DeVos, Elisabeth Prince; Giuliani, Rudolph W.; Hijaz, Malak; Hijaz, Samira; Hoblin, Ariana; Kennedy, Joseph; McLeod, William; Mueller, Robert S., III; Parnas, Lev; Prystaiko, Vadym Volodymyrovych; Rhames, Marilyn Anderson; Richburg, Addie L.; Rosen, Jeffrey A.; Schiff, Adam B.; Van Drew, Jefferson H.; Vindman, Alexander S.; White-Cain, Paula; Windebank, Chase; Zelenskiy, Volodymyr.

*Subjects:* Agriculture : Domestic production, strengthening efforts; Business and industry : Manufacturing industry :: Strengthening efforts; Canada : Trade agreement with U.S.; China : Relations with U.S.; China : Trade agreement with U.S.; Civil rights : Freedom of religion; Commerce, international : Free and fair trade; Commerce, international : North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA); Congress : Senate :: Impeachment trial; Economy, national : Improvement; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Education, Department of : Secretary; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Employment and unemployment : Unemployment rate; Government organization and employees : Federal regulations, review; Health and medical care : Abortion; Holidays and special observances : Religious Freedom Day, National; Justice, Department of : Deputy Attorney General; Mexico : Trade agreement with U.S.; Russia : 2016 U.S. elections, interference; Ukraine : Minister of Foreign Affairs; Ukraine : President.

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